

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 086557

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY TEXT RECEIVED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR.

DOD/DSAA:GEN FISH

PM:TSTERN (SUBS)

S/S:MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 086557

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, EG

SUBJECT: SALE OF C-130S

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS TELEGRAM IS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO OPEN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOE AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE ON PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE C-130 SALE. SPECIFICALLY, WE NEED TO KNOW GOE PREFERENCES ON A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL ISSUES SUCH AS THE TIMING OF DELIVERIES, CONFIGURATION OF THE AIRCRAFT, AND TRAINING.

2. THIS IS TECHNICALLY COMPLICATED SUBJECT, AND WE THEREFORE SUGGEST EGYPTIANS CONSIDER SENDING TEAM OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS IN GREATER DEPTH. THEY COULD PLAN TO COME AS SOON AS THEY WISHED AFTER CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF C-130 SALE HAS BEEN COMPLETED (I.E., ANYTIME AFTER APRIL 15).

3. BEGIN FYI: WE ARE PREPARED TO BEGIN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 086557

DELIVERY OF SIX C-130S FROM AIR FORCE PRODUCTION AS EARLY

AS POSSIBLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO SADAT. WE COULD HAVE THE FIRST AIRCRAFT IN EGYPT BY THE END OF MAY AND THE SECOND AIRCRAFT MID-JUNE.

TOTAL COST OF THESE SIX AIRPLANES, SPARE PARTS, GROUND EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING IS CURRENTLY ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN DOLS 55-70 MILLION. HOWEVER, LOCKHEED HAS PROPOSED THAT THE EGYPTIANS BE GIVEN THE OPTION OF PURCHASING SIX EXPORT MODEL C-130S WHICH HAVE BECOME AVAILABLE FROM A CANCELLED ORDER FOR DELIVERY BEGINNING IN DECEMBER, 1976. THE COMPANY CLAIMS THERE WOULD BE A PRICE ADVANTAGE FOR THE EGYPTIANS, THAT THE AIRCRAFT WOULD BE MORE COMPATIBLE WITH SUBSEQUENT C-130S THE EGYPTIANS PURCHASE AND THAT DECEMBER DELIVERY ALLOWS TIME FOR TRAINING OF PILOTS AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL. AS PART OF THE LOCKHEED PROPOSAL, TWO AIR FORCE C-130S WITH EGYPTIAN MARKINGS WOULD BE BAILED TO LOCKHEED AND COULD BE AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY TO EGYPT IN MAY FOR USE IN TRAINING.

4. WE SEE ADVANTAGES FOR EGYPT IN THE LOCKHEED PROPOSAL, BUT WISH AT ALL COST TO AVOID CONVEYING THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE BACKING AWAY FROM THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT. ACCORDINGLY, IN APPROACHING THE GOE ABOUT SENDING AN AIR FORCE TEAM, YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT WE WILL ABIDE BY GOE WISHES AND SPECIFICALLY THAT WE ARE PLANNING TO MEET OUR COMMITMENT TO HAVE PLANES IN EGYPT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER COMPLETION OF CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE SALE. IN ADDITION, IF YOU THINK ADVISABLE, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS IN GENERAL TERMS THE TWO OPTIONS WE SEE FOR THE C-130 SALE, EMPHASIZING THAT THE FINAL PURCHASE ARRANGEMENTS ARE ENTIRELY UP TO THE GOE. END FYI.

5. INASMUCH AS CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION IS STILL UNDER WAY, WE WOULD EXPECT EGYPTIANS NOT TO DISCUSS TEAM VISIT PUBLICLY AT THIS TIME. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PILOT TRAINING, MILITARY SALES, TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT, C-130, MILITARY ADVISERS, VISITS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE086557
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760135-0778
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760476/aaaacmxu.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <21 OCT 2004 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SALE OF C-130S
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, EG, US, LOCKHEED
To: CAIRO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006